

The True and Perfect
S P E E C H

O F
Mr. James Guthrey

L A T E
Minister of Sterling

A S
It was delivered by himself immediately
before his Execution, on *June 1. 1661.*
at E D I N B R O U G H.



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THE S P E E C H

OF

Mr. James Guthrey,

L A T E

Minister of S T E R L I N G.

Men and Brethren,

I Fear many of you come hither to gaze rather than to be edified by the carriage and last words of a dying man, but if any have an ear to hear, as I hope some of this great Confluence have, I desire your audience as to a few words: I am come hither to lay down this earthly tabernacle and mortal flesh of mine, and I bless God I do it willingly, and not by constraint, I say I suffer willingly, if I had
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been

been otherwile minded I might have made a diversion, and not been a prisoner, but I being conscious to my self of nothing worthy of death or bonds, I would not stain my conscience with the suspicion of guiltiness by my withdrawing. Neither have I wanted opportunity nor advantages to escape since I was a Prisoner: Not by the fault of my Keeper, God knows, but otherwile. But neither for this had I light or liberty, least I should reflect upon the Lords Name, and offend the Generation of the Righteous-

And if these men have not been mistaken or dealt deceitfullie in telling me so, I might have avoiced, not onlie the severity of the Sentence, but also had favour and countenance by complying with the course of the times: But durst not redeem my Life with the los of my Integrity, God knows I durst not.

And that since I was a Prisoner the Lord hath so held me by the hand, that
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he never suffered me to bring to debate in my inward thoughts, muchless to propound or hearken to any Overtures in that kind.

I did judge it better to suffer then to sin, and therefore I am come hither to laie down my life this day, and I bleſs God I did not as a Fool, not that I have any thing wherein to glorie in my ſelf: I acknowledge I am a Sinner, yea one of the vileſt and greateſt that hath owned a profeſſion of Religion, and one of the moſt unworthieſt that hath preached the Goſpel, my Corruptions have been ſtrong and manie and hath made me a ſinner even in all things, yea even in following my Dutie: And therefore righteouſneſs have I none of my own, but I do beleive that Ieſus Chriſt came into the World to ſave ſinners whereof I am the chief, through faith in his righteouſneſs and blood, have I obtained mercie, and in him and through him alone have I the hope of a bleſſed conqueſt and victorie over ſin and ſatan, and hell and death, and that I ſhall attain unto the
Reſur-

Resurrection of the just and be made a partaker of eternal life, I know whom I have beleived, and he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.

I have preached Salvation through his name, and as I have Preached so I believe, and do commend the riches of his free grace and faith in his blood unto you all, as the onely way whereby you can be saved, and I blefs God as I die not as a fool, so also I die not for evil doing, not a few of you may hapily judge that I suffer as a Thief, or as a Murderer, as an evil Doer, or as a busie-body in other mens matters, that was the lot of our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and hath been the lot of many of his precious people and servants, to suffer by the World as evil doers, and as my soul stirs not at that, but desires to rejoyce in being in conformity to my blessed head, and so blessed a company in these things, so do I desire in prayer that I may be to none of you to day on this account a stone of stumbling, or a Rock of offence.

Blessed

Blessed is he that will not be offended in Christ, and his poor servants, because of their being condemned as evil doers by the World, God is my record that in these things for which sentence of death hath passed against me, I have a good Conscience, I bless God they are not matters of Compliance with the Sectaries, or designs and practices against his Majesties person, or Government, or the Person or Government of his Royal Father, my heart I bless God is Conscious of no disloyalty, nay Loyal I have been, and commend it to you all, to be Loyal and Obedient unto the King, true piety is the foundation of true loyalty, a Wicked man may be a flatterer, and a time server, but he will never be a loyal Subject, but to return to my purpose.

Matters, for which I am condemned, are matters belonging to my calling and function, as a Minister of the Gospel, such as the discovery and reproof of sin, and pressing the holding fast the Oath of God and the Covenant, in preserving and carrying on the work of Religion and Reformation, according thereunto, and denying to acknowledg the civil Magistrate to be the competent Judge in matters Ecclesiastical, that in all these things which God so ordering by his gracious providence are the ground of my sentence and death,
I have

I have a good conscience, as having walked therein according to the light and rule of Gods word, as doth become a Minister of the Gospel. I do also bleſs the Lord that I do not dye as one not deſired, I know that of not a few I have never been nor am deſired: It hath been my lot to have been a man of contention and ſorrow: but it is my comfort that for my owa things I have not contended, but for the things of Jeſus Chriſt, and for what relates to his Inter-eſt and Work, and well being of his people, in order to the preſerving and promoting of theſe I did proteſt againſt, and ſtood in oppoſition to thoſe Aſſemblies at *St. Andrews*, and *Dundee*, and *Edenburgh*, and the publique reſolution of bringing the *Malignant* party to judicature, and Armies of this Kingdom, as conceiving the ſame contrary to the Word of God, and to our Solemn Covenant, and In-gagement, and to be an inlet to defection, and to the ruine and deſtruction of the Work of God, as it is now manifeſt to this day to mens Conſciences. I have not therein been miſtaken, and was not fighting againſt the man of ſtraw, I was alſo deſirous to have ſome poor Indeavour, to have the Church of God purged from inſufficient, ſcandalous, and corrupt Miniſters and Elders.

For

For these things, I have been mistaken by some, and hated by others: but I blesse the Lord, as I had the testimony of my own conscience, I am there in a approving, and in the conscience of many of the Lords people and precious servants, and how little soever I may dye not desired by some, yet by these I know I dye desired, and their approbation is of more value to me then all the contradictions and reproaches of the other: I doe with all my heart forgive them, and wherein I have offended any of them I doe beg their mercy and forgiveness, and doe from my soul wish that my death may be profitable unto both, that the one may be confirmed in the sweet way of the Lord, and that the other (if the Lord will) may be convinced, and cease from those things that are not good, and doe not edifie. But yet there is one thing I would warne you all of, that God is wroth, yea very wroth with *Scotland* and threatens to depart and remove his candlestick. The Causes of his wroth are many, and would to God that were not one great cause, that the causes of his wroth are despised and rejected by a great many. Consider that case that is recorded *Jer. 26.* and the consequence of it, and tremble and fear. I cannot but also say, there is a great increase of wroth by the deluge of prophanity that overflowes the Land, and hath reins loosed unto it every where; in so far that many have lost not only the use and exercise of Religion, but even morality and common civillity, that is to be found even among heathen.

Secondly, The horrible treachery and perjury that is in the matter of the Covenant and Cause of God, and work of reformation. Be astonished ye Heavens at this, shall the people break the Covenant and prosper, saith the Lord? Shall the Throne of iniquity have fellowship with God, which frameth mischief

by a Law. I fear the Lord is about to bring a Sword on this Land, which shall aveng the Covenant.

Thirdly, Horrible Ingratitude after ten years oppression and bondage. He hath broken the yoke of Strangers from off your necks, but what doe we render unto the Lord for all his kindnesse? Most of the fruit of our deliverance is to work wickednesse and strengthen our selves to doe evill.

Fourthly, Most fearfull Idolatry and sacrificing to the creature. We have changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the Image of a corruptible man, in whom many have placed almost all their salvation and desires, and have turned that which might have been a blessing unto us (being kept into a due subordination unto God) into an Idol of jealousie, by preferring it before him.

5. God is also wroth with a corrupt and carnal generation of corrupt and carnal time-serving Ministers; I know and bear Testimony, there is your true and faithful Ministers; blessed be God, we have yet many who study their duty, and desire to be found faithful unto the Lord; and I pray you to Honour, Reverence, and Esteem much of those for their Work sake; & I pray them to be encouraged in their Lord and Master, who is with them, to make them an Iron Pillar, and Brazen Wall, and a strong Defenced City, in their faithful following of their Duty: But O that there were not too many that minde Earthly things, that are enemies to the Cross of Christ, who push with the side and shoulder, who strengthen the hand of evil Doers, who make themselves Transgressors, by studying to build what formerly they did destroy, I mean Prelacy, and the Service Book, and the Myserie of Iniquity that works on us, whose steps lead us to the House of the great Whore, and Mother of Fornication;

on; and whoever he be that builds this *Jericho*, let him take heed of that Curse of the Flying Rowle mentioned in *Zach. 5.* and let all Ministers take heed that they walk and be stedfast in the Faith, and quit themselves, and be strong, and give seasonable warning concerning sin and Duty: Many of the Lord's people do sadly complain of the fainting and silence of many Watchmen; and it concerns them to consider what God calls for at their hand in such a day; Silence now in a Watchman, now when he is called to speak, and to give his Testimony on the peril of his life, is doubtless a great sin: The Lord open the mouths of his Servants to speak his Word with all boldness; That Covenant-breaking may be discovered and reprov'd, and that the Kingdome of Christ may not be supplanted, nor the souls of his people be destroyed without a Warning. I have but a few words more to adde; All that are prophane among you, I exhort to Repentance; for the day of the Lord's wrath hastneth, and is neer; but there is yet a Door of mercy opened unto you, if you will not despise the day of salvation. All you that are Malignant, and Reproachers of Godliness, and of such as live godly, take heed what you do; it will be a hard matter for you to kick against pricks; you make your selves the Burs of the Lord's fury and flaming Indignation, if you do not cease, and repent of your Ungodly deeds: All that are Neuters, and Indifferent Luke-warm Professors, be zealous, lest the Lord spew you out of his mouth. And you that repent for all the abominations that are done in the City, and in the Land, and that take pleasure in the stones and dust of Zion, cast not away your confidence; but be comforted and encouraged in the Lord, he will yet appear for your joy; God hath not cast away his people and work in

Britain and Ireland; I hope it shall once appear and revive by the power of his Spirit, and take root downward, and bring forth plentiful fruit upward; there is yet a holy Seed, a Root whom God will preserve, and bring forth; but how long and dark our night may be, I do not know; The Lord shorten it for the sake of his Chosen. In the mean time be you patient and immoveable, abounding in the work of the Lord, and in love one to another: Beware of Snares, which are strowed thick; Cleave unto the Covenant, and Work of Reformation; Do not decline the Cross of Christ; Chuse rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, then to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season; and account the reproaches of the Lord greater riches then all the Treasures of *Egypt*. Let my death grieve none of you, it will be more profitable and advantageous both for me and you, and for the Church of God, and for Christ's Interest, then my life could have been; I Forgive all men the Guilt of it, and desire you to do so also: Pray for them that persecute you, Bless them that Curse you, Bless I say, and Curse not.

I dye in the Faith of the Apostles and Primitive Christians and Protestant Reformed Church, particularly that Church of *Scotland*, whereof I am a Member and Minister; and bear my Testimony and Witness to the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of *Scotland*, by Assemblies, Synod, Presbyteries, and Societies; Popery, Prelacy, and also their Trumpery of Service and Ceremony I dee abhor, and bear my witnessing unto the National Covenant in *Scotland*, Solemn League between the three Kingdomes; the Sacred Solemn and Publick Oath of God I cannot believe can be loosed by or dispensed with by any Person or Power, or any one on earth, but are still binding
on

on these Nations, and will be for ever hereafter, and are Ratified and sealed by the Conversion of many thousand Souls since our entering therein: I bear my witnesse unto the Protestation against the Contraverted Assembly and their publick Resolution. To the testimony given against the Sectaries. Against that course of defection that is now in the Land, and all the branches thereof in that.

In the last place I bear my witnesse to the Crosse of Christ, and that I had never cause, nor have cause this day to repent of any thing I have suffered or can suffer for his Name; and I take God to Record upon my Soul, I would not exchange this Scaffold with the fairest Palace or Miter of the Greatest Prelate; blessed be God who hath shewed Mercy unto such a Wretch, and hath revealed his Son unto me, and made me a Minister of the Everlasting Gospel, that he hath dignified me in the midst of much Contradiction from Satan and the World, to fulfill my Ministry on the hearts of not a few of his People, especially in the Stage wherein I last was, I mean the Congregation of the Presbyterie of *Sterling*, God forgive that poor vain empty man that did there Intrude my labour, and hath made a prey of many poor Souls, and hath exposed others to reproach, and oppression, and a famine of the Word of the Lord, God forgive that misleader of the poor People, who tempted them to reject their alone Minister; the Father of Mercy pity that poor mislead people, and the Lord direct the Congregations and Presbyteries of *Scotland* once more with faithfull Pastors, and grant that the Work of the Lord may be revived through all *Britain* and over all the World: Christ is my Light and my Life, my Righteousnesse, my Strength, and my Salvation, he is also my Salvation and all my desire is in him; I doe
with

with all the strength of my Soul commend him to you :
 Blessed are they that are not offended in him ; Bless
 him O my Soul from henceforth, and for ever rejoyce,
 rejoyce, yea rejoyce all that love him, be patient and
 rejoyce in Tribulation ; blessed are ye, and blessed
 shall you be for ever, and everlasting love and Eter-
 nall Salvation is yours, all are yours, ye are Christs,
 and Christ is Gods.

*Remember me O Lord with the favour thou bear-
 est to thy one People, direct me with thy salvation,
 that I may see the good of thy chosen therein, that
 I may rejoyce with the gladnesse of thy Nation, that
 I may glory with thy Inheritance ; now let thy Ser-
 vant depart in peace, since my eyes have seen thy
 Salvation.*

FINIS.

